Comix Wave

CLAY GEERDES' COMIX WAVE 129
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CES VOIS D'ENFANTS

All I know is what I read in the Chronicle. It's 'pretentious' when Sinead O'Connor tears up the Pope's picture on Saturday night live [10/3/92 episode], but it's 'provocative' when '$60 million woman' Madonna plays dominatrix on her *Erotica* video. "...the video, while inappropriate for children, is really a satire about how little it takes to generate outrage," said Newsday's John Anderson in the Chron reprint of his ad/review. Chron flack John Carmen smarmily noted that the cast of SNL crowded around Tim Robbins and ignored O'Conner at the end of the show, but, gee, maybe they just weren't into bald women. Personally, I like O'Conner. It takes a lot of guts to go up against a sacred cow on national TV and no guts at all to make snotty remarks in a corporate promo sheet like the Chron. That major daily is mostly disinformation and satire itself. In the same issue that smears O'Conner and praises Madonna, a Chron editor juxtaposed a Dan Quayle visit to San Francisco with an article about New York urologist John Lattimer who claims he has Napoleon's dick in a jar. Hey, this is a real completist collector here. Another Dr. Mengele. Said Madonna: "I think there's a better way to present her ideas rather than ripping up an image that means a lot to other people," this from a woman whose MTVs are often sacreligious. Joe Pesci didn't like O'Conner's theatrical gesture and he put her down for bumming out the SNL cast. Joe was on Arsenio's show to promote **THE PUBLIC EYE**. His career has taken off since **LETHAL WEAPON 2** and **GOOD FELLAS**. Kelly Coffield did Sinead O'Conner to James Carrey's Jay Leno on **IN LIVING COLOR** and you can bet half the stand up comics around the country are going to be tearing up pictures of someone in their acts for the next few weeks. On Friday, October 16, Fred Gardner noted that the "rich hipsters in the audience booed Sinead O'Conner offstage" at a Madison Square Garden tribute to Bob Dylan. Can it be they have forgotten his "motorcycle black madonna two-wheeled gypsy queen" line? Gardner writes a regular column for the **Anderson Valley Advertiser**, America's last Underground Newspaper. Nota Bene--Robert Crumb grew up Catholic and one of his first cartoons depicted a little Snoidlike character peeking up a nun's habit on the cover of the first **YELLOW DOG** tabloid. Tsk! Tsk! No wonder he was never asked to guest on *Donahue*. Question is, will Donahue, an Irish Catholic, have O'Connor on his show and exploit the Pope incident or will it slide into popcult history?

I just got around to reading the collection of Bobby London's **MONDO POPEYE** strips put out by St. Martin's Press. A lot of funny stuff. With the plethora of Popeye reprints around, you would never think Elsie Segar only did the strip for eight years. All the biographical information on London in **MONDO POPEYE** is suspect. Some of it is just plain wrong, whether on purpose or not, I don't know, but let me correct it here. Bobby London's **DIRTY DUCK** stuff originated in Dan O'Neill's Air Pirates Studio and appeared in the various **AIR PIRATES FUNNIES**. The strip never originated in the Los Angeles **FREE PRESS** in 1971. What was in that paper for which I was a regular reporter at the time was Gilbert Shelton's weekly page featuring the **FABULOUS FURRY FREAK BROTHERS. FREEP** did not run any other strip regularly, though we did run Ron Cobb's political cartoons and some of those of Ed Badajos. London did his duck strip for the Air Pirates comics and from July, 1969, to around 1972 for the **BERKELEY TRIBE**. His work appears in **LEFT FIELD FUNNIES** and in **DOPIN' DAN** and I recall that he contributed something to **THE FACTS OF LIFE FUNNIES** published by Rip Off Press. As for Segar, he sold **THIMBLE THEATER** to the syndicate in 1919, but Popeye wasn't created until 1929. Popeye was introduced into the strip when Castor Oil needed someone to sail a ship for him. The first appearance of Popeye was on January 17, 1929. He was licensed to Fleischer Studios and animated in 1932, appearing in a cameo role in a Betty Boop Cartoon. Segar died of cancer in 1938 and his fishing buddy Bud Sagendorf did most of the work that last year or so. Dell printed the first four-color **POPEYE** comic books and **POPEYE** had his own title in 1948. All of the strips have been reprinted in book form in the past few years by Fantagraphics and Robert Altman directed the most recent film about **POPEYE** in 1981. Robin Williams played the sailor and Shelley Duvall was Olive. Popeye was the original superhero, the first comic character with super strength and probably a subliminal influence upon Philip Wylie whose 1930 novel **GLADIATOR** was "adapted" by Jerry Siegel into **SUPERMAN** in 1932. Personally, I can't remember a time when **POPEYE** wasn't popular. William Faulkner even named a character for him in his 1930 novel **SANTUARY**. London's **MONDO POPEYE** is very well done. It keeps to the spirit of Segar's character while bringing in contemporary styles and ideas. London pokes fun at yuppie behavior and seems to have a good time with these two panel gag strips. As you know, he's off the strip for putting in material that was unacceptable to the bluenoses who control the stripscene. It's okay for Madonna and Michael Jackson and Prince et al to do outrageous things on MTV, but try to get anything relevent into a newspaper strip and hypocrisy trickles down on you from above.

CITY LIMITS GAZETTE is $15 a year from Steve Willis, POB 390, McCleary, WA 98557-0390. Home of the Bil Keane watch. Clark Dissmeyer expands the parameters of the watch in the current issue. Incidentally, I like the idea of a Comics Journal index as well as an expanded one for other fanzines, but *for the list to be at all useful to the scholar it will have to be annotated and the primary texts will have to be available in a library somewhere.* I would like to see those articles which have historical value stored on microfilm and available through interlibrary loan. One problem that occurs to me is that many of the articles that appear in zines are little more than egoboo and hype for the going product. Some even hype zines that never made it to the printer. After a year or so writing about comics, I learned not to say a lot about books I did not have safely in hand, because the best laid plans... In the heyday of underground comix, artists were so ecstatic at being in demand that they often said yes to far more projects that they could possibly draw with the result that a number of books in progress remained little more unfulfilled promises.

A twelfth issue of **THE FABULOUS FURRY FREAK BROTHERS** will be out this October. Ordering information from 1-800-468-2669.

Brad Foster has done it again, this time with another hit of outrageous erotica dedicated to the illustration of the major sex scandals of The Bible. The first volume of **THE BAWDY BIBLE** features an adaptation of The Book of Esther by Foster and Jim Thompson. It's $6 pp from POB 165246, Irving, TX 75016, and yes, you need an age statement stating you're over 21 or 18 along with your order.

You can get 64 pages of Skip Williamson's outtakes for $5 pp, POB 5496, River Forest, IL 60305-5496. Skip's contribution to the underground was Snappy Sammy Smoot. This new book is called **NAKED HOSTILITY**. A signed and numbered copy if $25.

Terry Laban's new title is **CUD. #2** should be out this November. Laban's editorial cartoons appear regularly in **IN THESE TIMES.**

ART FOR THE RICH

And here they were again in the flesh, feeding off my fantasies, absorbing them. I had always suspected that silvery people like that needed other deeper roots to feed them. Out of their mean lives, from furnaces which never touched them, people like me forged the artifacts which they took as their own, embalming them in art galleries and museums, safely locking them away for their own delectation. The creations of outsiders like myself were the food of the rich, without them the beauty, the sheer flamboyance of their lives would wither and die. They fed on the black muck of their lives, their petals grew sheeny on the stink. It was happening right in front of me, you could almost see it oozing off the walls. It wasn't that I felt superior to anything, Far from it. Those people out there were tigers. I was no match for them on nearly every level.

Rosie Scott in **GLORY DAYS**, 1988.

El demonio en el corazón

TSUKIKAGE

EL RIFLE CON SILENCIADOR SUBMARINO

MANGA

The artwork around this blurb is from the **EL VIBORA** special on **Manga**, Japanese comic art. You can get this special and other publications in Spanish from J. M. Berengueuer, Plaza Beatas 3, Barcelona Spain. $10 pp. **KISS COMIX 10** is also $10. Adults only.